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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert for use in a muffler comprising:

a ~~filled insert comprising at least one pipe and a body of wool-type fibrous material conforming to the shape of a compartment in a tool product, said wool-type product surrounding a portion of said at least one pipe;~~ and

a ~~yarn thread wrapped wound around the body, thereby confining the volume of the body, and secured to an outer portion of said wool-type product.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least one pipe(s) comprises ~~the muffler insert includes a~~ perforated pipe.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim [1] 2, wherein said ~~filled~~ ~~the~~ insert further comprises ~~includes~~ at least one partition(s) coupled to said at least one ~~the~~ pipe.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 3, wherein at least one of ~~said the~~ ~~at least one partitions~~ ~~partition(s)~~ comprises a perforated partition.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 1, wherein said ~~the~~ yarn thread comprises a polymer yarn thread having a tensile strength at room temperature of at least 550 megapascals and having a tensile strength at temperatures greater than about 80 degrees Celsius of at most 50 megapascals.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ ~~muffler~~ insert of claim 5, wherein said ~~the~~ polymer yarn thread is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene yarn ~~thread~~ and modified polyethylene ~~yarn~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 5, wherein said the polymer yarn ~~thread~~ has a fiber diameter of between approximately 0.2 and 1.0 millimeters.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 1, wherein said the yarn ~~thread~~ comprises a steel yarn thread.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 1, wherein said the wool-type product comprises one or more strands of a continuous strand material.

10. (Currently Amended) The ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert of claim 9, wherein said the continuous strand material comprises one or more strands each comprising a plurality of glass filaments selected from the group consisting of E-glass filaments and S-glass filaments.

11. (Currently Amended) A ~~filled and wound~~ The muffler insert of claim 1, wherein the muffler insert includes a core material, and wherein the body of wool-type fibrous material surrounds at least a portion of the core material comprising:

~~a filled insert comprising a core material and a wool-type product, said wool-type product surrounding a portion of said core material; and~~
~~a yarn thread wrapped around an outer portion of said wool type product.~~

Claims 12 - 15 (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method for forming a ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert comprising:

providing an ~~unfilled muffler insert a tool having one or more compartments;~~
~~coupling said unfilled muffler insert within a shaped tool, said shaped tool~~
~~having an upper section and a lower section, said shaped tool and said unfilled muffler~~
~~insert defining at least one compartment there between;~~
introducing a fibrous material within one of said at least one of the
compartments compartment to form a ~~filled insert~~ wool-type fibrous body;
placing said filled insert the tool onto a winding machine, ~~said winding tool~~
defining a center axis;
moving said upper section of said shaped tool away from said lower section
along said center axis to create a gap;
wrapping a yarn ~~thread~~ around at least a portion of the body to form the muffler
~~insert~~ filled insert exposed within said gap to form the ~~filled and wound~~ muffler
insert;
removing said shaped the tool and the ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert from said
~~winding tool~~ the winding machine; and
extracting the ~~filled and wound~~ muffler insert from the shaped tool.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein introducing a fibrous material comprises:

introducing a nozzle of a texturizing device within a fill opening of said the
shaped tool; and

introducing one or more strands of a continuous strand material from said the
texturizing device through said the nozzle and into said the compartment under
vacuum pressure.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein wrapping a yarn thread comprises:

coupling said the yarn thread contained on said the winding machine to a gripper ~~located at a position near said gap;~~

rotating a portion of said the winding machine around said the tool filled insert such that said the yarn thread is wound onto said the body of fibrous material to form the muffler insert filled insert; and

cutting said the yarn thread between said the muffler filled insert and said the winding machine.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18 further comprising affixing said the yarn thread around said to the muffler filled insert.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19, wherein affixing said the yarn thread around said filled to the muffler insert comprises affixing said the end of the yarn to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein affixing said the end comprises ultrasonically welding said the end to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein affixing said the end comprises hot welding said the end to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein affixing said the yarn thread around said filled to the muffler insert comprises knotting said the end of said the yarn thread to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

24. The method of claim 19, wherein affixing said the yarn thread around said filled to the muffler insert comprises affixing said the end within said fibrous portion the body of fibrous material.

25. (Currently Amended) A method for forming an odd-shaped a muffler comprising:

providing an unfilled muffler insert;

coupling a shaped tool around a portion of said the unfilled insert, said the shaped tool having an upper section and a lower section, said the shaped tool and said the unfilled insert defining a at least one compartment there between;

forming a filled insert filling the at least one compartment within said shaped tool-with a fibrous material such that the material forms a wool-type body within the compartment of the tool;

placing said filled insert the tool onto a winding machine;

moving said the upper section of said the shaped tool away from said the lower section to create a gap;

wrapping and securing a yarn thread around a portion of said filled insert the body of fibrous material exposed within said the gap to form a filled and wound muffler insert;

removing said the shaped tool and said filled and wound the muffler insert from said the winding tool;

extracting said filled and wound the muffler insert from said the shaped tool;
and

coupling said filled and wound the muffler insert within a muffler shell.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein forming a filled insert the wool-type body comprises:

introducing a nozzle of a texturizing device within a fill opening of said the shaped tool;

introducing one or more strands of a continuous strand material from said the texturizing device through said the nozzle and into said the compartment under vacuum pressure.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein wrapping and securing a yarn thread comprises:

coupling said the yarn thread contained on said the winding machine to said filled insert the body within said the gap;

rotating a portion of said the winding machine around said filled insert the body such that said the yarn thread is wound onto said filled insert the body; and

cutting said the yarn thread between said filled insert the body and said the winding machine; and

securing said the yarn thread around said filled insert the body.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27, wherein securing said the yarn thread around said filled insert to the body comprises affixing said the end of the yarn to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein affixing said the end comprises ultrasonically welding said the end to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein affixing said the end comprises hot welding said the end to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

31. The method of claim 27, wherein securing said the yarn thread around said the filled insert comprises knotting said the end to said another portion of said the yarn thread.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein coupling said filled and wound the muffler insert within a muffler shell comprises:

providing a muffler shell having a pair of open ends and an interior region;

providing a pair of end pieces;

pressing said filled and wound the muffler insert through said the open end and within said the interior region;

coupling one of said the pair of end pieces to one of said the pair of open ends;

coupling the other of said the pair of end pieces to the other of said the pair of open ends;

sealingly affixing said the one of said the pair of end pieces to said the one of said the pair of open ends; and

sealingly affixing said the other of said the pair of end pieces to said the other of said the pair of open ends.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein coupling said filled and wound the muffler insert within a muffler shell comprises:

providing a muffler shell having an interior region and a first end and second end; and

coupling said the muffler shell around said filled and wound the muffler insert such that said filled and wound the muffler insert is substantially contained within said the interior region and such that said the first end substantially abuts said the second end; and

sealingly affixing said the first end to said the second end.

34. (Cancelled)

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35. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein at least one of the one or more compartments includes a perforated pipe.

36. (New) The method of claim 25 wherein the muffler insert includes a perforated pipe.

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